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WEST BRANCH TIMES

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Koenig to play pro basketball

WBHS, Bradley & Green Bay standout signs contract with German team

By Gregory R. Norfleet
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Tatum Koenig will go pro. A standout player at West Branch High School, Bradley University, and the University of Wisconsin-Green Bay, the 23-year-old last week signed a one-year contract with Theresianum, a woman's basketball team based in Mainz, Germany.

Koenig, who graduated from WBHS in 2018, said she dreamed about playing in col-

lege but "never had any idea of playing professionally."

"That was never an end goal for me," she said. "But in my fifth year, I realized how much I still loved the game. My body feels too good to be done."

Theresianum posted to its Facebook page, "ASC Theresianum Mainz," an announcement that Koenig filled the first of its "import" spots. She leaves for Germany at the end of July.

"Tatum is a strong point guard who thrives on her good physicality and terrific court

vision. She also brings significantly more scoring to the position," Athletic Director Dominique Liggins wrote.

The post noted that the effort to recruit Koenig was the first time Head Coach Aron Duracak got "significantly involved."

"To get exactly the player you wished for at this position is simply great. She fits perfectly into my idea of a point guard," Duracek wrote in the post.

Koenig said a couple of coaches told the 5-7 point guard

that her skills show she could play overseas, so she ended up getting an agent. She made a highlight film and her agent sent it out to several teams.

The Mainz (pronounced "Mines") coaches liked what they saw in her video and stats, plus their own research.

"They got ahold of me and we talked over Zoom for almost two hours," the daughter of Brad and Nikki Koenig said. "They had a lot of good stuff to say about my game and I liked



Tatum Koenig's team photo from Green Bay University in Wisconsin. Photo from GreenBay-Phoenix.com

Koenig

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After Sunday's severe storm, the sky opened to the west and the setting sun highlighted cotton ball clouds over West Branch. KCRG meteorologists called these "mammatus" clouds that form under a thunderstorm's anvil cloud. Keaton Norfleet/West Branch Times

Severe storm damages homes, vehicles



Parked side by side, two pickup trucks in the 600 block of East Main Street/Herbert Hoover Highway suffered damage when a large limb fell from a nearby tree. Gregory R. Norfleet/West Branch Times

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Downed limbs fell on at least one home and a few vehicles while strong winds tore skirtings off manufactured homes and knocked over a semi tractor trailer when a severe storm passed through West Branch on Sunday.

City of West Branch and Cedar County workers quickly moved in with chainsaws and tools to reopen roads and fix traffic control signs after the West Branch Fire Department sounded the tornado siren at about 5:40 p.m.

Pea-sized hail began falling a few minutes

later, followed by quarter-sized hail. Strong winds lasted about 20 minutes but a severe thunderstorm remained for another half an hour.

Especially in neighborhoods with mature trees, winds pulled recently bloomed leaves from their branches and blanketed streets in green.

Falling limbs smashed a sedan at the intersection of Oliphant and Northside Drive and two pickup trucks in the 600 block of East Main Street/290th Street/Herbert Hoover Highway.

West Branch Village's south section, including

Storm

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City may cut WBPL budget by 13%

Library begins planning to absorb \$30,000

By Gregory R. Norfleet
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Facing possibly \$30,000 in funding cuts, the West Branch Public Library — rather than the City of West Branch — will decide how to absorb the loss in the library's

2024-25 budget. Following an hour-long discussion on May 1 that covered staffing, operation hours, insurance, benefits, and the still-undetermined impact of new property tax reform laws, the City Council allowed the library to take the

lead in addressing the problem.

The question hinged on whether the WBPL should hire a fourth person now, with the possibility that the new employee may get laid off next year — even if the employee is laid off, the

city may then have to pay unemployment benefits while trying to deal with stunted tax revenues.

To address the overlap between the city's financial contributions and the WBPL's authority, new Library Director Becky Knoche, Library Board member Shari Heck, and Friends of the WBPL rep-

resentative Lisa Nelson presented scenarios for managing the expected shortfall.

The potential \$30,000 cut in the 2024-25 budget would amount to a loss of about 13 percent of the library's total funding — \$231,400 — in 2023-24.

WBPL

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